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HINTS ON HOW TO RAISE BOBWHITE QUAIL IN CAPTIVITY IN LEAFLET

How the bobwhite quail, one of the most popular and widely distributed game birds in the country, can be successfully raised in captivity for restocking depleted covers is explained in detail in a new publication recently issued by the United States Department of the Interior.

One man can successfully handle 40 pairs of breeding birds and their offspring at the height of the season. From this number at least 1,600 chicks should be raised to maturity, the authors say. One usually can get \$1.50 each for 10-weeks-old birds and \$5 a pair for older birds sold as breeders.

Entitled "Bobwhite Quail Propagation," the publication is Number 10 in the Department's series of Conservation Bulletins. It was written by Ralph B. Nestler and Woodrow W. Bailey, Biologists of the Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, cooperating with the Division of Wildlife Research, of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior. The bulletin is available at 10 cents a copy from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C.

"Foresighted citizens have come to realize that wildlife needs help," the authors write, "and with their awakened interest have stimulated an increasing number of farmers, 4-H Club members, and others to raise upland game birds in captivity."

A native bird of Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota, and all States east of these except Vermont and Maine, the bobwhite has been introduced in large areas of Washington, Oregon, Montana, Colorado, North Dakota, Vermont, and Maine. It has also been introduced in smaller areas in Idaho, Utah, Arizona, and California, and in a small area of southeastern Wyoming it is a native species.

Classed as a game bird throughout nearly all of its range, the bobwhite is designated as a song bird in Ohio and is protected throughout the year in this State. In Maine, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin there are also no open seasons.

In 1938 there were at least 324 commercial breeders of bobwhites in the United States, it was shown in a Fish and Wildlife Service survey. In addition, several State game commissions were also engaged in the propagation of these game birds.

No Get-Rich-Quick Business

Quail propagation is not a get-rich-quick business, the authors warn. The breeder must have good common sense and managerial ability. Persons engaging in this work for the first time are cautioned against investing heavily at the start. An initial trial with two or three breeding pairs will show what success may be expected.

The authors discuss the problems of quail propagation. The selection, housing, care, and feeding of the breeding birds are explained in detail. Other sections of the leaflet are devoted to commercial and small-scale operations of incubators; housing, care of young; feeds and diets; care to be taken during winter; and disposal of stock.

For those who wish to construct their own pens, detailed drawings are included with the text, and photographs illustrate the equipment described by the authors.

Before purchasing bobwhite quail for propagation, one should write his State game commission for regulations on game-bird propagation and information as to how stock may be legally disposed of.

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